

DOCKING RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.



ANNUAL REPORTS

of the

**Medical Officer of Health
and Sanitary Inspector
for the year 1942**

STAFF.

Medical Officer of Health :

L. G. ANDERSON, M.D. Liverp., Ch.B., D.P.H.

(Serving with The Royal Air Force since September 1st, 1939).

Temporary Medical Officer of Health :

IRENE B. M. GREEN, M.D., B.S., D.P.H.

(Appointed October, 1939).

Sanitary Inspector and Sanitary Surveyor :

W. B. JENKINS C.R.S.I., C.S.I.B.

DOCKING RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH. Year ending 31st December, 1942.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for 1942.

Vital Statistics.

There were 275 live births registered during the year and 12 still births. This gave a birth rate of 17.36, a considerable increase on last year's figures of 14.26 and well above the national rate of 15.8. There was no increase in illegitimate births.

The total number of deaths registered in 1942 amounted to 194, of which 104 were male and 90 female. The crude death rate was 12.25 a decrease on last year's figure of 14.20 but above the national rate of 11.6. The main causes of death were heart disease and cancer, the latter showing a very slight increase on last year. 65% of these deaths occurred at ages over 65%, while 35 of them were over 75.

The infant mortality rate has been practically halved, having reached a record low level of 21.82. This means that for every 50 babies born during the year only one died under the age of one. All the infant deaths occurred within 3 months of birth and half of them took place in the first 3 days. All but one were due to prematurity and other conditions present at birth. There were no maternal deaths.

Infectious Disease.

There were 16 cases of notifiable infectious disease during the year which is less than half the number notified in 1941. The main cause of the decrease was a complete absence of diphtheria, compared with 18 cases the previous year (including one death). It would be rather premature to attribute this entirely to the high percentage of children who have now been immunised but it is certainly a very encouraging sign,

Scarlet fever was the most prevalent disease (excluding measles and whooping cough) and 8 cases occurred, with one death. The cases were scattered and there was no epidemic.

There were 75 cases of measles notified and 4 cases of whooping cough, a great reduction in each case on last year's figures. No deaths were reported from either of these diseases.

Diphtheria Immunisation Scheme.

After the intensive immunisation campaign of 1941, efforts were made during 1942 to keep up the same high percentage of immunes in the child population.

The Birthday Letter scheme continued to be of great value in encouraging mothers to bring their babies for treatment as soon as they attained the age of one year.

The District Nurses have worked hard amongst the under fives and the Teachers have been equally helpful with the school children. The General Practitioners in the district have done at least half the work this year as only small groups or isolated cases were still left to be treated.

The estimated percentage immunised at the end of December was:—

Pre-School Children (Aged 1-5)	School Children (Aged 5-15)
45%	84%

These figures are somewhat below those for 1941 specially for the younger group, but may not give a completely accurate picture of the position. Returns from doctors are not always up-to-date and there are frequent movements of children in and out of the area.

There are no means of knowing the exact position among the under fives without taking a complete census of the young child population. Lists of names were therefore obtained from the Food Office and sent to the District Nurses so that a canvass might be made in 1943 parish by parish. This should ensure that none are treated without the fact being recorded in the public health department and also that every child between one and five is given the opportunity of benefiting under the Council's scheme.

Besides the complete absence of diphtheria from the district in 1942, there has been a decrease in the number of cases in the country as a whole and a smaller mortality rate.

These results are most encouraging and lead us to hope that in each succeeding year there will be less and less of this serious disease until a time when it is as rare as smallpox or plague. It must be emphasised, however, that we can only achieve this by relaxing no effort to secure immunity for every child in the country.

Tuberculosis.

There were 17 new cases of tuberculosis notified in 1942, and 7 deaths from this cause. All the deaths were in cases of the pulmonary type, 5 of them males and 2 females. At the end of the year there were 122 cases on the register, the male pulmonary type predominating.

There has been no appreciable increase in incidence in 1942 but there were a larger number of deaths compared with the previous year.

It is specially gratifying to note that there has been no increase in the incidence of non-pulmonary cases among children under 15, which suggests that the standard of milk production in the district has not been appreciably lowered in spite of wartime difficulties.

Contagious Disease.

There has been an increase in the number of cases of scabies which have had to be dealt with under the Council's domiciliary treatment scheme. The increase may be partly due to more cases being referred by general practitioners as the arrangements become more widely known and appreciated.

Upon receiving a report of an affected household a routine visit is paid by the Sanitary Inspector. He leaves two leaflets, one describing the disease in simple language and the other giving directions for treatment. A stock of benzyl benzoate lotion is kept for issue to cases as they occur. Every member of the household is urged to be examined and if affected, to be treated at the same time. At a subsequent visit, it is found that 9 out of 10 cases have cleared up and only a small proportion of the remainder, usually due to inadequate treatment, need to be removed to an institution to effect a cure.

In no case was it found necessary to take proceedings under the Scabies Order 1941 during the year.

Housing.

. Owing to the cessation of building and the difficulty of effecting necessary repairs to existing property, the housing situation in the district becomes worse with each year of war.

On the rare occasions when a Council house becomes vacant, the most poorly housed family in the parish must automatically be given the tenancy. As, however, the most careless tenants tend to gravitate to the least desirable property, this leads to Council houses being occupied by less and less satisfactory people, with all that that means in increased wear and tear. Moreover, the old slovenly conditions are frequently reproduced in the new surroundings and the latter state of the family is often little improvement on the first.

The satisfactory management of even a simple house requires a certain level of intelligence in the housewife and a considerable amount of training. It follows from this that the mentally defective girl should never be allowed to be a wife and mother. If she becomes one or both of these, then her home should be under strict supervision.

Far more adequate and prolonged courses of housewifery should be part of every girl's education and the more backward the girl the longer should be her training.

The system of skilled inspection, which is designed to educate the tenants to take a pride in their houses, if adopted would certainly lead to a higher general standard of house-management

If this were combined with the erection of a few reformatory houses made of less destructible material, less pleasant to live in and subject to more frequent inspection, it might have an educational and deterrent effect upon the lazy and careless who were transferred to them. It would at the same time ensure that the better houses were kept for those most likely to give them reasonable care.

Another difficult housing problem and one which has recurred frequently during the past year is that of the unsatisfactory living conditions of many of the aged and enfeebled. Unable to look after themselves or their houses properly, or even to keep themselves clean, they usually refuse the only alternative, which is the public assistance institution.

No housing scheme can be complete which does not cater for a few old people and provide them with simple pleasant accommodation with help and supervision available, so that they can have the maximum of liberty while receiving adequate care.

Many of these suggestions are beyond the control of a rural district council but are nevertheless closely concerned with the satisfactory carrying out of their housing responsibilities.

To ignore the human side of the problem is to condemn the most ambitious of housing schemes to a very moderate degree of success.

Office Accommodation and Clerical Assistance.

At my request, the three District Councils met representatives of the County Council to consider the provision of office accommodation and clerical assistance for the Medical Officer of Health. This meeting resulted in the present arrangement whereby my office is housed at the Walsingham Council offices and I am provided with the services of a part-time clerk.

This has been a very satisfactory solution of the problem and has led to a great improvement in administration.

Conclusion.

The health of the district has been excellent during the year, largely due I believe, to the very good distribution of available food-stuffs, the improved economic conditions in the majority of households and the necessarily larger amount of home-grown garden produce which has had to be consumed. The skilful addition of milk, vitamins, school meals and meat pies to those sections of the population most in need of them has undoubtedly contributed to this satisfactory state of affairs and every credit is due to those agencies, national and local, which have been responsible for their provision.

Again I should like to show my appreciation of the great assistance I have received during the year from the Chairman and members of the Public Health Committee and the loyal co-operation of the staff.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

IRENE B. M. GREEN,

Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1942.

Area (in acres)	87,386
Resident Population mid-year 1940 (as estimated by Registrar-General)	15,840
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1940) ...	5,850
Rateable Value (end of 1940)	£60,000
Sum represented by a Penny Rate	£235

VITAL STATISTICS.

Live Births.	Total.	Males.	Females.			Dock.	E. & W.
Legitimate	257	137	120	} Birth-rate per 1000 of estimated resident population			
Illegitimate	18	8	10				
Total	275	145	130			17.36	15.8
Still Births							
Legitimate	11	5	6	} Rate per 1,000 total births		41.81	—
Illegitimate	1	—	1				
Total	12	5	7				
				Rate per 1,000 pop.		0.75	0.54
Deaths	194	104	90	Crude Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population		12.25	11.6
Deaths from puerperal causes						0	2.01

Infant Mortality:—

	Total.	Males.	Females.
Legitimate ...	6	4	2
Illegitimate ...	—	—	—
Totals ...	6	4	2

Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births ... 21.82 49

Infant Deaths.

Age.	Total.	Males.	Females.
1—3 days	4	1	3
2—12 weeks	1	1	—
3—12 months	1	1	—
60/12—1 year	—	—	—
Totals	6	3	3

(E. & W. = England and Wales):

The causes of death given in this table are supplied by the Registrar-General:—

CAUSES OF DEATH.						MALES.	FEMALES.
All Causes... ..						104	90
1	Typhoid and Paratyphoid	...	...	...	...	—	—
2	Measles	...	...	...	...	—	—
3	Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	—	1
4	Whooping Cough...	...	...	...	...	—	—
5	Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	—	—
6	Influenza	...	...	...	...	3	2
7	Encephalitis Lethargica	...	...	...	...	1	1
8	Cerebro-spinal Fever	...	...	...	...	1	1
9	Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	...	...	...	...	5	1
10	Other Tuberculous Diseases	...	...	...	...	—	—
11	Syphilis	...	...	...	...	—	—
12	General Paralysis of the Insane	...	...	...	...	—	—
13	Cancer	...	...	...	...	16	19
14	Diabetes	...	...	...	...	2	2
15	Cerebral Hæmorrhage, etc.	...	...	...	...	10	14
16	Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	32	14
17	Aneurysm	...	...	...	...	—	—
18	Other Circulatory Diseases	...	...	...	...	1	2
19	Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	8	7
20	Pneumonia (all forms)	...	...	...	...	6	1
21	Other Respiratory Diseases	...	...	...	...	2	—
22	Peptic Ulcer	...	...	...	...	1	—
23	Diarrhœa, etc. (under two years)	...	...	...	...	—	—
24	Appendicitis	...	...	...	...	1	—
25	Cirrhosis of the Liver	...	...	...	...	—	—
26	Other Diseases of the Liver	...	...	...	...	—	—
27	Other Digestive Diseases	...	...	...	...	2	6
28	Acute and Chronic Nephritis	...	...	...	...	1	3
29	Puerperal Sepsis	...	...	...	...	—	—
30	Other Puerperal Diseases	...	...	...	...	—	—
31	Congenital Debility, Prematurity, etc.	...	...	...	...	3	2
32	Senility	...	...	...	...	—	—
33	Suicide	...	...	...	...	—	—
34	Other Violence	...	...	...	...	1	3
35	Other Defined Diseases	...	...	...	...	—	—
36	Causes Ill-defined or Unknown	...	...	...	...	8	11

TUBERCULOSIS.

Age Periods.	NEW CASES.				DEATHS.			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5—	1	—	1	1	—	—	—	—
15—	—	2	—	1	1	1	—	—
25—	1	2	1	1	1	—	—	—
35—	—	2	—	1	1	—	—	—
45—	1	—	—	—	2	1	—	—
55—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 upwards	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTALS	5	6	2	4	5	2	—	—

The number of cases on the Tuberculosis Register at the end of the year was:—

Type of Case	Males	Females	Total
Pulmonary	38	27	65
Non-Pulmonary	31	26	57
TOTALS	69	53	122

There were 6 deaths from Tuberculosis, and 17 new cases notified during the year.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (other than Tuberculosis).

The incidence of notifiable disease during the year is shown in the subjoined table.

Disease.	Total Cases.	Admitted to Hospital.	Deaths.
Smallpox	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	8	1	1
Diphtheria	—	—	—
Enteric Fever	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	—	—	—
Pneumonia	5	2	—
Cerebro-spinal Fever ...	—	—	—
Erysipelas	1	—	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	2	1	—
Acute Poliomyelitis ...	—	—	—
Totals	16	4	1

MEASLES AND WHOOPING COUGH REGULATIONS,
1939.

Disease.	Total Cases.	Admitted to Hospital.	Deaths.
Measles	75	—	—
Whooping Cough ...	4	—	—

CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED.

	Cattle, exclud- ing Cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep and Lambs.	Pigs.
Number killed (if known) ...	1202		32	4444	210
Number inspected	1202 including cows	& calves		4444	210
<i>All diseases except Tuberculosis</i> Whole carcasses condemned	—	—	1	4	—
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	179	—	—	8	1
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuber- culosis	14.8	—	3.1	0.27	0.47
<i>Tuberculosis only.</i> Whole carcasses condemned	8	—	—	—	1
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	195	—	—	—	28
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	16.88	—	—	—	13.8

COUNCIL OFFICES,

DOCKING, NORFOLK.

ANNUAL REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR.

To the Chairman and Members of the Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I respectfully submit for your consideration my Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1942.

INSPECTIONS. The number of inspections made during the year is as follows:—

Slaughterhouses, for meat inspection	158
Housing (for repairs, overcrowding, etc.)	54
Cowsheds and Dairies	72
Factories and Workshops	16
Salvage	175
Evacuation	38
Inspections under the Public Health Act, including matters connected with drainage, scavenging, water supplies, etc.	204
Miscellaneous	399
Food shops, for inspection of unsound food	41

NOTICES. The following preliminary notices were served requiring the provisions of the various Acts to be complied with:—

Housing Acts	13	Public Health Act	27
Milk and Dairies Act	9	Factories Acts	2

Statutory Notices. The Council authorised the serving of two such notices under the Housing Act. Both were complied with.

NUISANCES, ETC. A considerable number of nuisances in connection with drains, cesspools, premises, etc., were discovered during the year. These were remedied by taking informal action with the persons concerned and in no instance was it necessary to report the matters to the Council.

HOUSING. As a result of inspections under the Housing Act, a number of houses were found not to be in all respects fit for habitation, and measures were taken to have the necessary repairs carried out. The dearth of labour and materials made it increasingly difficult in some cases, to get even the smallest repairs attended to, and if this shortage continues, it is going to be extremely difficult for the Council to carry out their obligations under the Housing Acts.

Housing (Rural Workers) Act. No applications for assistance under this Act were received during the year. In one case, in which 6 families were concerned, it was found that rents in excess of those allowed by the Act were being charged. This was brought to the notice of the owner, and the rents were reduced to the maximum chargeable under the Act.

MEAT AND FOOD INSPECTION. During the year regular inspections was made of all animals slaughtered at the Ministry of Food's slaughterhouse at Hunstanton. Owing to various reasons, slaughtering could not be carried out at regular days or times, and this resulted in a considerable amount of night and Sunday work.

Tuberculosis was again the chief cause necessitating the condemnation of meat and out of 1,202 bovine carcasses inspected, 8 whole carcasses were condemned for generalised T.B. 118 heads and 46 livers were also affected, and 174 beasts were found to have T.B. lungs. 40 beasts heads and 35 livers were condemned for diseases other than T.B. and 119 livers were trimmed for local affections.

Of 210 pigs examined, 1 whole carcase was affected with generalised T.B. and 28 other carcasses had local affections.

Of the 4444 sheep examined, not one was found to be affected with T.B.

FOOD SHOPS. 41 visits were made to Grocer shops for the inspection of food suspected to be unsound. 170 tins of canned food and a quantity of miscellaneous other food, was found to be unfit for consumption. Unsound canned meat or fish can be highly dangerous and it is fortunate that such suspected food was notified for inspection.

There were no cases of food poisoning notified during the year.

DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS. The work of visiting cowsheds and dairies for the inspection of the methods of milk production and distribution was continued throughout the year.

As milk, more than any other food, is consumed in a raw state by children, it is essential that every effort should be made by those responsible for its production, for a safe and clean article of food to be produced.

Inspections are carried out for the purpose of seeing that the various requirements of the Acts and Orders are complied with, and at the same time, advice on the best methods to be adopted by the producer is readily given.

Although milk producers, like most other people, are labouring under difficulties, the standard of cleanliness found in most cowsheds and dairies, was fairly satisfactory, and it was necessary to serve only 7 notices for unsatisfactory conditions.

14 samples of milk were taken for examination for the presence of the tubercle bacillus and not one sample was found to be positive. The frequent sampling of milk from a large number of producers spread over a wide area is, in itself, a task of some magnitude; but as sampling is necessary for the detection of tubercle bacilli in milk, every effort will be made in the future to take as many samples as possible.

DRAINAGE, SEWERAGE, ETC. The only work under this heading carried out by the Council during the year was the maintenance of the Snettisham sewer and the River Wensum and its incidental ditches at East Rudham.

Numerous inspections of drains, cesspools, closets, etc., were made when necessary, for compliance with the Public Health Act, or for the abatement of nuisances.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

(a) **Indestructible Refuse.** The collection of indestructible refuse, was continued throughout the year without interruption, collections ranging from fortnightly to two-monthly.

Apart from the collection of refuse, the collectors were actively engaged on salvage work by—(i) salving anything of value from refuse, and (ii) collecting quantities of paper from storage depots of parish salvage organisers and transporting it to a central depot for weighing, etc. Eighteen parishes depend upon the Council's lorry regularly collecting their paper and after the paper is sold, the parish organisers are paid its value and furnished with a statement of account.

(b) **Heacham Scavenging.** During the year the Heacham Parochial Committee thought it expedient to re-organise the cleansing services in the parish. New men were obtained, and working arrangements modified. The work of refuse collection and nightsoil collection has since proceeded satisfactorily. Cesspool emptying, however, caused some concern and a report on this matter suggesting certain improvements was submitted to the Committee.

(c) In Burnham Market, Burnham Overy and Ringstead, where scavenging contractors are employed, the work proceeded satisfactorily. At Docking, owing to periodical illness of the contractor, some inconvenience was caused to householders on occasions.

SALVAGE.

(a) **Paper.** Most of the paper salvage collections in the district were carried out by voluntary organisations or by individuals who had organised collections in their parishes.

A total of 103 tons, 6½ cwts. was collected in 1942, compared with 73 tons, 16 cwts. in 1941 and the following tables show the comparative amounts of paper collected per 100 of the population for the last 2 years.

1941.			1942.		
Parish.	Approx. Popu- lation.	Cwts. Paper collected per 100 of Population.	Population as for 1941.		
			Parish.	Cwts. Paper per 100 of Population.	
Brancaster ...	550	17.9	Heacham ...	23.03	
Heacham ...	1908	16.7	Brancaster ...	20.0	
Holme ...	300	16.4	Holme ...	18.84	
Dersingham ...	1600	10.4	Burnham Market	14.54	
Snettisham ...	1300	9.8	Snettisham ...	13.62	
Sedgeford ...	720	9.79	Burnham Overy ...	13.25	
Birchams ...	700	9.2	Burnham Norton ...	12.93	
Rudhams ...	1000	9.05	South Creake ...	12.26	
Burnham Overy ...	400	7.75	Ingoldisthorpe ...	11.53	
Ringstead ...	400	7.1	Docking ...	11.49	
Thornham ...	500	7.1	Syderstone ...	10.88	
Ingoldisthorpe ...	375	6.6	Dersingham ...	10.50	
Burnham Market	1320	6.06	North Creake ...	10.02	
Docking ...	1300	6.03	Birchams ...	9.42	
Brancaster Staithe	550	5.6	Brancaster Staithe	8.45	
South Creake ...	630	5.2	Stanhoe ...	8.43	
Fring ...	250	2.8	Burnham Thorpe	8.0	
Stanhoe ...	400	2.68	Thornham ...	6.85	
Burnham Thorpe ...	300	2.5	Ringstead ...	6.78	
Syderstone ...	440	2.2	Sedgeford ...	4.72	
North Creake ...	500	1.5	Rudhams ...	4.7	
			Fring ...	3.35	
			Bagthorpe ...	2.72	

(b) **Miscellaneous Salvage.** With the exception of paper, practically all other salvage materials are collected by the Council's refuse collectors. Table 1 shows the *total* weight of miscellaneous salvage collected and Table 2 shows the amount collected by the refuse collectors.

Table 1.	Tons. Cwts.	
Iron	25	10½
Non-ferrous metal	1	5
Bones	6	14¾
Rubber	3	3¼
Rags	2	1½
Tins	12	9¼

Table 2.	Tons. Cwts.	
Iron	18	17
Non-ferrous metal	1	1½
Bones	6	10
Rubber	2	8½
Rags	1	3
Tins	12	9¼
Paper	9	6
Bottles	1	12

The amount realised by the Council from salvage collected by the refuse collectors was £121 14s. 11d.

Salvage collections showed an all-round improvement on those of last year, and according to monthly statements from the Ministry of Supply, Docking Council averaged 7th position for salvage collections, out of the 15 Rural Districts in the County.

WATER SUPPLIES.

Samples of the Council's public supply continued to show satisfactory results. A number of private well water samples were also taken, and where it was considered necessary, the owner was communicated with to repair the well, or make the water safe for drinking purposes.

No cases of typhoid fever, or any other water-borne disease were notified during the year.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The number of infectious diseases notified during the year was remarkably low, and only 6 visits were made, these being in connection with cases of scarlet fever. Scabies, however, was very prevalent and 72 visits were made to houses where the condition existed, for the purpose of giving advice and supplying treatment. The treatment provided by the Council is very effective provided it is carried out according to instructions. Thirteen fumigations were carried out after infectious diseases and scabies.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

One bakehouse was found to be in an unsatisfactory condition of cleanliness and the informal notice served on the owner was complied with.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Council for providing me during the year with clerical assistance and office accommodation, both of which have been appreciated.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

W. B. JENKINS,

Sanitary Inspector.

